

Turner, Nicole

From: Angelina M. Lasko <angelinal@humboldt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 7:46 PM
To: Turner, Nicole
Cc: COB
Subject: Re: I have my hand raised

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Public Comment:

"I want the board to consider if they are burning bridges or building bridges. Bringing diversity of opinion other than the appointed BOS commissioners is beneficial to the commission and the community. Why does it matter if you remove yourself from meetings if you completely want to remove the position. That should bother you. It is more than obvious Bushnell has a strong issue with this and she is my supervisor and her attitude and bullying on the board is embarrassing. I remember she too has a lot of conflict of interest we neglect to talk about. Less does not always equal more and Humboldt County sees a high rate of project that poses conflict, so having a larger board would be more beneficial to capture the communities interest and needs."

Okay. I called right when Virginia called for public comment. I just never was called. I kept raising my hand. Every time I hit star *9 it would say I was raising my hand, even though I had already raised it. I have to make phone calls on wifi only. Probably because of the delay. I cannot hear Virginia talking on my phone. It does not come in clear.

Thank you.
Angelina Lasko

On Tue, Oct 25, 2022 at 7:34 PM Turner, Nicole <nturner@co.humboldt.ca.us> wrote:

Please feel free to email your comments and they will be included in the publishing of the agenda.

Thank you,

Nikki

From: Angelina M. Lasko <angelinal@humboldt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 7:33 PM
To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: I have my hand raised

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Hayes, Kathy

From: Melanie McCavour <hcpcmccavour@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 9:55 AM
To: COB
Cc: Bass, Virginia; Madrone, Steve; Wilson, Mike; Bohn, Rex; Bushnell, Michelle
Subject: Planning Commission Size discussion Item 22-1446 Oct. 25th 2022

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Dear Supervisors,

I learned of this item of discussion yesterday afternoon, and will also try to call in.

Firstly, I do not see a rationale presented to you for a reduction in size of the commission. A presentation of a statistical subset is not a rationale, but rather, is a presentation of a data sample without argument for or against a 5 vs 7 member PC.

The American Planning Association (APA) has published numerous articles on this topic, and on the role of the PC generally; I have linked the longer review article below. It is an interesting read.

However, much of the debate centers on whether a PC is needed or helpful, given that planning is now a "mature" discipline, rather than the size, and on the characteristics that define what an effective planning commissioner is; integrity, planning knowledge and interest were the two most important in the APA's surveys and studies.

This is because it is already established that a higher diversity of voices from different educational profiles, backgrounds and experiences, improves all decision making processes.

Much of the recent literature has examined the successes emanating from a stronger presence of women on Corporate and other Boards, for example.

A Commission of 7 also removes much of the risk of not achieving quorum, which is frequent in Counties with 5 members. Given that we have double the number of hearings relative to other Counties, due to the many projects that must go through a hearing, this would be particularly unwise here, as Humboldt County has hundreds of applications in queue and cannot afford to reduce the number of hearings.

This proposal therefore gives the perception that the County is looking at decreasing diversity and representation in the public process while running a risk of slowing the permitting process.

I have also been told that there is the perception that this is a convenient way to remove myself, for purported conflict of interest reasons. I would hope that this is merely a rumoured perception, as an example of bias towards my employer, or any other group over the many years I have served on the Arcata and Humboldt County PCs does not exist. I do not serve on other Boards, Commissions, and do not benefit financially or otherwise from any decision made, and indeed, have voted to approve many projects that negatively affected myself, my family, home, and/ or employer.

I take the role very seriously.

Concern from another Government and the Planning Department that somehow the Bear River Band has an "unfair advantage" is unfounded, and against the clear evidence of objective decision making I have made.

Further, it should be noted that unfortunately, there is a perception that our governmental bodies lack transparency. Removing people without bias from appointed positions for reasons of bias could only worsen our image, while decreasing diversity in decision making and slowing the permitting process due to potential quorum issues.

Sincerely,
Melanie

Counties with 7 or more Commissioners (I could fully review all if helpful):

Contra costa
Santa Clara
San Diego
Imperial (10)
Fresno (9)
Yolo
Sutter
Sonoma (9)
Marin
Merced
Stanislas (9)
Sanger
Monterey (9)
Toulomne
Washoe

Douglas County is an outlier with only 3.

<https://www.planning.org/media/document/9192286/>

Melanie J. McCavour, M.Env., Ph.D.
Humboldt County Planning Commissioner
[707-267-4797](tel:707-267-4797) (c)

Hayes, Kathy

From: Noah Levy <noah@landwaterconsulting.com>
Sent: Monday, October 24, 2022 11:05 PM
To: Wilson, Mike; Bohn, Rex; Bushnell, Michelle; Bass, Virginia; Madrone, Steve
Cc: Hayes, Kathy; Ford, John
Subject: Please retain the at-large Planning Commission seats

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Supervisors,

I intend to speak in person before you on Tuesday regarding this matter, if I can make the timing work. But in case I cannot be present for that item, I wanted to get my brief thoughts about it onto the record.

I strongly believe that the Humboldt County Planning Commission benefits from having seven members rather than five. I say this regardless of the individuals who currently happen to be in the at-large seats, but more generally as a matter of how we function. I believe that we are capable of doing better work as a body, reaching better outcomes, and are more able to move a greater number of projects through our process when we have seven capable, committed members of the body available, rather than five. Quite simply, I fear that removing the at-large seats and reducing our number will result in worse outcomes for the projects that come before us, and will further slow the process of getting projects approved.

I know that staff has presented evidence that the majority of surveyed counties have only five commissioners, not seven. But what this fails to capture is that the Humboldt County Planning Commission actually has a significantly bigger workload than most other comparable counties do. I know this as a matter of personal experience because I have served on the Executive Committee of the California County Planning Commissioner Association (CCPCA) for the past three years (including serving as its President in 2020-21, and organizing its conference in Eureka a year ago). I have personally compared my experience with several dozen commissioners in this capacity, and have reviewed the agendas of perhaps 20 other county planning commissions in my efforts to publicize our conference last year. It is simply a fact that most counties do not process the same number of items through their planning commission as Humboldt County does — indeed, many comparable counties do not even regularly hold two planning commission meetings a month.

If you remove two of my fellow commissioners, you simply shift that same total workload onto fewer shoulders. The work will not be done better, but the burden will be greater on those of us who already do this very time-consuming and demanding work for no compensation other than a small stipend.

I support the staff's other recommendations regarding rules and procedures pertaining to the Planning Commission, but I urge you to reject the staff's proposal to remove the at-large seats.

Respectfully,

Noah Levy
Vice Chair and Third District Representative Humboldt County Planning Commission